

To Members of the California State Assembly:

Like a fine wine, fire chiefs improve with age and experience. Just because an individual hits a mark on a calendar does not mean that he or she is incapable of doing his or her duties. I encourage our public servants to continue to serve our state as long as they are willing and capable.

For these reasons, I am signing Assembly Bill 1769 to allow Los Angeles County to retain its current fire chief, Michael Freeman.

Chief Freeman is a well-respected leader in Los Angeles County. Losing his expertise and experience by placing a limit on his service is a detriment to the Los Angeles County Fire Department and the four million residents it serves. If he is willing and capable, he should be allowed to serve until he is ready to retire. Furthermore, the Legislature should revisit this issue and eliminate the clause that requires the chief to resign in 2009.

Sincerely,

Arnold Schwarzenegger